

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 058395
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 058395

EXDIS, FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NU

SUBJECT: U.S. POSTURE IN NICARAGUA CRISIS

1. AS RESULT OF YOUR CONSULTATIONS AND THE OPPORTUNITY
THEY AFFORDED FOR A REVIEW OF THE NICARAGUAN SITUATION,
WE HAVE COME TO THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS.

2. NICARAGUA MAY WELL PRESENT A CRUCIAL TEST FOR OUR
LATIN AMERICA POLICY, AFFECTING NOT ONLY NICARAGUA BUT
OUR INTEREST IN THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE AS WELL AS THE AVOIDANCE OF
INSTABILITY IN THE CENTRAL AMERICAN REGION. THE CURRENT
SITUATION IS SERIOUS, PRESENTING CONSIDERABLE POTENTIAL
FOR INCREASING POLARIZATION AND GROWING VIOLENCE, AND
THE POSSIBILITY OF CIVIL WAR, OR SOMETHING CLOSE TO IT,
THAT COULD LEAD EITHER TO THE EMERGENCE OF A RETROGRESSIVE
AND REPRESSIVE RIGHT-WING DICTATORSHIP (LED BY SOMOZA
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OR A SUCCESSOR FROM THE NATIONAL GUARD) OR A BREAKDOWN
REMINISCENT OF PRE-CASTRO CUBA, LEADING TO A REPRESSIVE
REGIME OF THE EXTREME LEFT ALONG THE CUBAN MODEL. EITHER
OF THESE "WORST CASE" SCENARIOS WOULD CONSTITUTE A MAJOR
SETBACK TO OUR POLICY IN THE HEMISPHERE, OUR HUMAN RIGHTS
POLICY AND NECESSARILY AFFECT NICARAGUA'S NEIGHBORS.

3. WE INTEND TO MAINTAIN OUR POLICY OF NON-INTERVENTION AND WILL NOT SEEK TO IMPOSE A "MADE IN U.S." SOLUTION. BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY IMPOSES AN OBLIGATION TO ENCOURAGE BY LEGITIMATE MEANS THE CONCERNED PARTIES TO WORK OUT A MADE-IN-NICARAGUA SOLUTION THAT WOULD MINIMIZE VIOLENCE AND PUT NICARAGUA ON THE DEMOCRATIC ROAD. THIS IS PARTICULARLY SO BECAUSE NICARAGUANS LOOK TO US FOR SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS. FAILURE TO STRESS THOSE GOALS WOULD ENHANCE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE SCENARIO OF VIOLENCE WOULD PLAY OUT AT A PROBABLE COST OF CONSIDERABLE HUMAN SUFFERING.

4. ACCORDINGLY, YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO TAKE THE FOLLOWING GENERAL APPROACH, WITH THE CAVEAT THAT ANYTHING THAT POSES QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER IT WILL DEVIATE FROM THESE INSTRUCTIONS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO WASHINGTON IMMEDIATELY.

-- MAINTAIN STRICT NEUTRALITY AMONG POLITICAL GROUPINGS AND AVOID IDENTIFICATION WITH SOMOZA OR WITH ANY POLITICAL FACTION.

-- MAINTAIN A REASONABLE LEVEL OF CONTACT WITH ALL LEGITIMATE FORCES IN THE SOCIETY, BUT AVOID BEING PERCEIVED AS A HUB OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL ACTIVITY.

-- IN CONVERSATIONS WITH POLITICAL ELEMENTS OF ANY PER-
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SUASION, ENCOURAGE AVOIDANCE OF VIOLENCE BOTH BY THE NATIONAL GUARD AND THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION, WHICH COULD EXACERBATE THE PRESENT CRISIS, AND ENCOURAGE ALL FACTIONS TO COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER AND TO SEEK A DEMOCRATIC AND PEACEFUL SOLUTION. THIS SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, INCLUDE ACTING AS A NEGOTIATOR ON BEHALF OF ANY GROUP NOR SERVING AS A GUARANTOR FOR ANY AGREEMENTS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, POLITICAL STABILITY, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE058395
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SOLAUN;SHELTON;WELTER;MCNEIL:MDK:BGT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780103-0472
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780396/aaaaddjc.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8be197cb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3412720
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. POSTURE IN NICARAGUA CRISIS
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, SHUM, NU, US
To: MANAGUA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8be197cb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014